



Mass protests stop police coup in Ecuador

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

The Ecuadorean people came into the streets by the thousands to confront the national police and prevent a coup and possible assassination of President Rafael Correa on Sept. 30. A section of about 800 of these police had kept the president captive for 14 hours at the Police Hospital in Quito before military units brought him back to the presidential palace.

Like the rightist coup that kidnapped and overthrew legitimate Honduran President Manuel Zelaya in June 2009, this latest coup attempt targets a country that chose to join the Bolivarian Alliance of Our Americas (ALBA). It was a blow directed at the progressive political developments taking place in Latin America that challenge U.S. imperialist interests.

U.S. ambassador to Ecuador, Heather Hodges, is a notorious right-wing anti-Cuban diplomat once closely associated with the genocidal Ríos Montt dictatorship in Guatemala. In 2008 she defended the U.S. role when Ecuador's Defense Minister Javier Ponce revealed that U.S. diplomats were involved in corrupting the police and officers from the armed forces.

Most progressive analysts attribute the Sept. 30 coup's defeat to three factors: first, the mass response in Ecuador; second, the immediate international support for constitutional rule from the progressive governments in Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba followed by all others in Latin America along with mass mobilizations throughout South America; and third, Correa's courageous refusal to bow to the police threats.

Since details of this outrageous act have been broadly publicized, this article will try to present the most important developments that will help put the attempted coup in the context of political developments in Ecuador and Latin America. Vice president of the Ecuadorean Workers Confederation (CTE), Edgar Sarango, gave Workers World some of that context

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OCT. 2 RALLY SHOWED

Potential power of U.S. working class & the political crisis it must overcome

By Larry Holmes
Washington, D.C.

On Oct. 2, the "One Nation Working Together" mobilization brought together an estimated 200,000 people of all nationalities, ages, genders and sexual orientations in Washington, D.C. The unifying theme for this massive outpouring was for the creation of good-paying jobs for the more than 30 million unemployed and underemployed workers.

The multinational social composition of the demonstration reflected the changing character of the U.S. working class that has taken place since the mid-1980s. Many who came were Black women and Latinas. There was also a significant number of young people of color there demanding both jobs and a decent education. The trade union movement poured millions of dollars into organizing thousands of buses full of members representing every union, large and small.

Feeder marches were organized by students and youth, immigrant rights, anti-war and socialist activists. In the wake of the Sept. 24 FBI raids and grand jury re-



WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Jobs rally, Washington, D.C., Oct. 2.

pression against political activists, banners, placards and literature on this important development were very visible throughout the day.

Getting 200,000 workers to Washington for anything is no small thing and it's something that happens far too seldom. The organizers of the Oct. 2 rally are to be

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SOLIDARITY VS. FBI 6-8

Stephanie Weiner and Joe Iosbaker announced during Oct. 5 press conference in Chicago that they and other subpoenaed activists would not cooperate with the FBI "fishing expedition."
 Read article on page 7.



Activists defy Chicago grand jury

WW PHOTO: LOU PAULSEN

Black farmers keep up struggle for compensation

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

African-American farmers have held a series of activities highlighting the failure of the Senate to pass legislation that would grant them compensation for decades of discrimination by the U.S. government.

Most recently, they were in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 27 demanding \$1.15 billion due them through a lawsuit that dates back to the 1990s. Even though the Department of Agriculture had agreed to settle the suit, known as the Pigford case, the federal government bureaucracy denied the claims of most of the farmers.

Last year the Obama administration had agreed to include funds for settling outstanding claims by thousands of African-American farmers in the annual budget. The House of Representatives passed the bill, but the Senate excluded the appropriations, which were tacked on to a Pentagon spending bill.

Before the recent protest, John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association, spent more than a week in Washington driving a tractor called “Justice.” He visited the Senate, where he urged members to pass the legislation.

Interviewed by the National Newspaper Publishers Association, Boyd said: “It’s discrimination. It’s about justice. Black farmers have not been getting justice.” (Sept. 27)

Marching alongside Boyd and other farmers were members of the Congressional Black Caucus, including Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas, current leader Barbara Lee of California and former Chairperson Maxine Waters of California. Waters said she had been working on this issue for almost 15 years and had urged then-Attorney General Janet Reno “to waive the statute of limitations so that farmers could redress decades of financial and racial discrimination with the Department of Justice.” (NNPA, Sept. 27)

At a news conference after the march, Sens. Kay Hagan of North Carolina and Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, who is chair of the Agricultural Committee, said they would introduce a stand-alone bill with Sen. Mary Landrieu of Louisiana to provide funding for the \$1.15 billion settlement.

A Sept. 24 letter to the Senate signed by many groups demanded “immediate action by the Senate in passage of legislation to fund the Black farmer settlement. ... Black farmers in the case have waited for more than a decade

for a resolution of their cases. This is far too long.”

The signers included the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, the Land Loss Prevention Project, the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, and the Rural Advancement Fund, all members of the Network of Black Farm Groups. Also signing the letter in support were the NAACP, the National Farmers Union, the Malcolm X Center for Self-Determination, the Rural Library Project and a host of other organizations from around the U.S.

Demand stand-alone bill

Previous efforts to win compensation have led to appropriations attached to other legislation. African-American farmers are demanding that any new effort be channeled through separate and specific legislation designed to award claims.

John Boyd stated recently: “I am calling for a cloture vote on a stand-alone Black farmers’ bill. While there are lots of very important causes, the Black farmers know that unless this bill is considered on its own merits, other bills that have nothing to do with this issue — including the Cobell Native American trust fund case — may keep it from passing.” (Indian Country Today, Sept. 27)

Boyd continued, “Black farmers are dying, in fact another farmer active in the movement died this past week, and I can’t let politicians use other issues as excuses not to vote on justice for Black farmers.” Plaintiffs in the Cobell case have not received any compensation either, despite support by the Obama administration for a \$3.4 billion settlement proposal.

Thousands of Cobell plaintiffs would receive \$1,000 to \$2,000 in payments, amounts that their representatives argue are far too small to compensate Native people for more than a century of the Interior Department’s misuse and exploitation of their lands.

Dennis Gingold, lawyer for the Native plaintiffs in the Cobell case, said that the Black Caucus was unhappy with the Senate bill and would “oppose any supplemental war appropriations bill unless Pigford is on it.”

Whether the two cases are settled separately or together, the amounts of compensation in question can in no way ameliorate the Native and African peoples’ centuries-long suffering as a result of forced removals, enslavement and national discrimination. All oppressed nations in the U.S. have a right to reparations and complete self-determination. □

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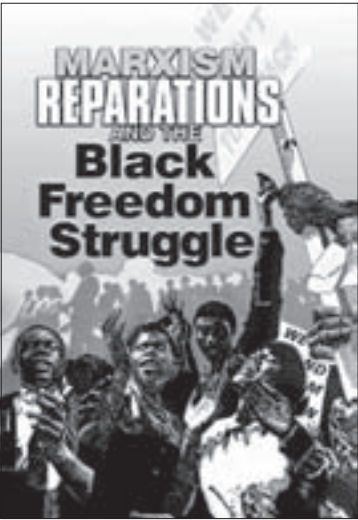
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Demand national moratorium on foreclosures

Major lenders reveal massive mortgage fraud

By Jerry Goldberg
Detroit

The recent revelations of massive fraud in the processing of foreclosures by major banks demonstrate the urgent necessity for activists to press the demand for an immediate declaration of a two-year moratorium to halt all foreclosures and evictions in the U.S.

On Sept. 22 it was reported that GMAC announced it was suspending the evictions of homeowners in the 23 states governed by judicial foreclosures. This was followed by similar announcements by JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America.

The states affected by this suspension of foreclosure activity are Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Wisconsin.

The basis for these announcements was the uncovering of massive fraud by the banks in the processing of foreclosures — in states covered by judicial foreclosure — where the banks have to take borrowers to court to seize their homes — the lenders were filing motions for summary judgment to speed the process, accompanied by affidavits stating that the signers had personal knowledge that the loans were in fact owned by the bank and were in default.

During legal depositions in several cases, it was revealed that the signers of the affidavits had, in fact, no personal knowledge of the facts being sworn to. They were working for foreclosure mills.

A Sept. 22 New York Times article noted that Jeffery Stephens, working on behalf of GMAC (now Ally Bank), was signing 10,000 affidavits a month over the past last five years despite not having reviewed the files to determine whether banks were entitled to enforce their liens.

The New York Times on Oct. 4 went even further, pointing out that many signatures on the affidavits appeared to be forged and the notarizations improper.

The foreclosure suspensions by GMAC, JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America were to give them time to clean up their acts. But the revelations of this massive fraud by some of the country's largest



WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Jerry Goldberg gets signatures for a moratorium on foreclosures petition at Oct. 2 jobs rally in Washington, D.C.

financial institutions are symptomatic of the overall foreclosure crisis devastating the working class.

What can stop the crisis?

Virtually every government program announced to help homeowners with modifications is collapsing. The programs are based on the premise that the same banks that will not even take the time to properly carry out foreclosure activity, which is their primary concern, will treat borrowers who seek loan modifications in a fair manner.

The programs are all based on the borrower calling the lender to request the mandated modification. However, borrowers are stymied by the fact that the lenders either have no one to answer the call, or when they do, the banks routinely deny the modifications in violation of their agreements with the federal government to carry them out.

For example, on Aug. 20 the New York Times reported the collapse of President Barack Obama's Making Home Affordable modification program. It said that of the 3 million households that were intended to benefit from the program, only one-sixth had actually had their loans modified. In July, some 96,000 individuals were denied permanent modifications, while only 17,000 were placed into new trial modifications, signaling the program's demise.

In July, the state of Michigan announced it had received \$184 million from the federal government for the Helping Hardest Hit Homeowners program, a program geared to keeping unemployed workers in their homes. While the funding for this program has increased to

\$500 million, the program has been a dismal failure thus far, with only 230 homeowners being helped out of the 30,000 that were expected to qualify.

According to an August report by the Center for Responsible Lending, the home equity wealth lost in the U.S. due to nearby foreclosures for 2009-2012 is projected to be \$1.9 trillion. Nine million homes are expected to be lost to foreclosure during the same period.

The immediate necessity is for the federal government to declare a national two-year moratorium on all foreclosures and evictions. With the majority of home loans now either owned or backed up by the federal government through Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac or the Federal Housing Authority, President Obama has the authority to declare such a moratorium by executive order.

The time is ripe for housing activists to press this demand in light of the current revelations. Sign the online petition in support of a two-year moratorium at: www.bailoutpeople.org/moratoriumpetition.shtml.

Goldberg is an anti-foreclosure attorney and an organizer in the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs.

Foreclosures & lost wealth

Mortgage delinquencies and foreclosures:

State foreclosure projections:	2010:	2.8 million
State foreclosure projections	(2009-2012):	9 million
Total state foreclosure starts	(Q1-2008 through Q1-2010):	4.9 million
Total state foreclosure sales	(Q1-2008 through Q3-2009):	1.3 million
Total state foreclosure inventory	(end Q1-2010):	2.1 million
Total state past due mortgages	(end Q1-2010):	6.2 million
Annual change in foreclosure starts in the state	(ending Q1-2010):	-10 %
Change in state foreclosure starts	(Q3-2006 to Q1-2010):	162 %

Lost wealth:

U.S. lost home equity wealth due to nearby foreclosures, 2009-2012:	\$1.9 trillion
Number of homes experiencing foreclosure-related decline:	91.5 million
Average loss per home affected:	\$20,288

Source: Center for Responsible Lending, August 2010

'Pass New York's Intro 48'

Homeless group, allies demand housing

By Rick C.
New York

On Sept. 29, Picture the Homeless, a grassroots organization founded and led by homeless people, gathered along with many supporters at City Hall for a press conference and rally urging passage of Intro 48. They were joined by activists with the Million Worker March, the Bail Out the People Movement, the South Bronx Community Congress, Community Voices Heard and Families United for Racial and Economic Equality, just to name a few.

Intro 48 is a law that will empower the city to conduct an annual census on vacant properties and to identify the owners of the properties. PTH wants these vacant properties converted into housing for all who need it.

The bill was introduced in February and even though it has 27 co-sponsors, the legislation has been idle ever since. PTH states, "If we don't move, the bill won't move," and adds, "The properties we see are homes-without-people for people-without-homes."

There were a number of speakers. Among them was a member of FUREE, who stated, "We need to stop making trips to Washington, D.C., and put our focus on our communities first because it has to start here before we can take it there."

Brenda Stokely of MWM said, "We've got to unite together. All who endorse an action need to come to support the action and do it in large numbers. When we do nothing they take everything, and we can't let that happen."

After the speakers, everyone gathered



WW PHOTO: G. DUNKEL

behind the PTH banner to march to the city council, where chants of "Pass Intro 48!" were heard loud and clear. Demonstrators lined up in front of the city council holding signs and continuing to chant relentlessly, enough to draw a crowd of city council members who stepped out to see what was going on.

A police presence became visible but they kept their distance. Council member Melissa Mark-Viverito greeted the demonstrators as she walked past but the Council Speaker, Christine Quinn, didn't seem too enthused as she walked by.

This struggle for really affordable housing is vital and needs support. Gentrification in the city is running rampant. The message is "Goodbye people, hello developers." That has to change because it is a violation of humanity when anyone is left out in the street.

Developers aren't developing anything for anyone but themselves. They displace untold numbers of people, and the banks are key contributors to this. It is time to stand together and obliterate these capitalistic ways that have caused so many to be homeless. It's time to occupy! □

Increase in gay teen suicides needs addressing

By **Jeri Hilderley and Janet Mayes**
New York

The recent number of lesbian/gay/bi/trans teen suicides requires all our concern. In recognition of this, community vigils are being carried out throughout the country.

Rutgers University held a silent vigil the night of Oct. 3 for 18-year-old Tyler Clementi, a first-year student and serious violinist, who jumped off the George Washington Bridge after he and a male friend’s encounter in his dorm room was secretly streamed online. Clementi’s death is but one in a growing number of teen suicides.

Another vigil hosted by New York Uni-

versity LGBT organizations and Delta Lambda Phi was held in Washington Square Park on Oct. 3 for Clementi, as well as for Asher Brown (Texas), Seth Walsh (California), Billy Lucas (Indiana), Justin Aaberg (Minnesota), Jaheem Herrera (Georgia), Eric Mohat (Ohio), Carl Hoover (Massachusetts) and Raymond Chase (a student in Providence, Rhode Island).

Any young person who is being targeted or bullied should be directed to the New York City LGBT Center’s Youth Enrichment Services (YES), a Safe Schools Program which provides staff training to middle schools and high schools throughout all five boroughs, New Jersey and Westchester County. This service

and others like it (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) recognize and intervene when any student is the target of ignorance or hate.

Sexual identity issues need to be discussed openly in our schools. Several state lawmakers are beginning to introduce legislation to strengthen their state’s anti-bullying laws and create stiffer penalties for invasion of privacy.

Clementi’s family said in a statement, “Our hope is that our family’s personal tragedy will serve as a call for compassion, empathy and human dignity.” □



New York vigil, Oct. 3.

PHOTO: JANET MAYES

MICHIGAN STRUGGLES IN BRIEF

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**
Detroit

Report covers up FBI killing of imam

Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox issued a report Sept. 30 on the killing of Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah. This African-American Muslim and community leader was shot at least 20 times by FBI agents on Oct. 28, 2009, at a Dearborn, Mich., warehouse where he had been lured by informants under false pretenses.

When the imam arrived to purportedly unload goods from transport trucks, which in actuality had been supplied by the FBI, he was attacked by a police dog and shot to death by several agents. The report issued by Cox upholds the actions and position of the federal government.

The report begins with unsubstantiated allegations taken directly from the U.S. District Attorney’s office in a 44-page criminal complaint issued at the time of Imam Abdullah’s killing. Cox states that “FBI agents’ use of deadly force in this matter was legally justified.”

In a report issued by the Dearborn Police Department on Oct. 1, new details reveal that the killing of the imam was a counterterrorism operation. To assist Detroit agents, the FBI brought in more than a dozen agents from an elite squad in Quantico, Va., known as HRT — Hostage Rescue Team. (Detroit Free Press, Oct. 1)

According to the Free Press, “Three of the four agents who shot at Abdullah were with HRT. The team is known for dealing with hostage or counterterrorism situations.”

In addition to 66 federal agents being involved in the operation, there was also the presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Wayne County Sheriff’s Department, Detroit Police and Dearborn Police.

Various organizations have rejected the attorney general’s report as relying almost exclusively on information provided by the FBI and government informants. The Council on American-Islamic Relations of Michigan has criticized the report as being one-sided.

A press statement issued by the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality on Oct. 1 said, “We believe that the 22-shot barrage that brought an end to the life of Imam Luqman, and which resulted in at least 10 men awaiting trial on minor criminal charges, represents a misuse of federal, state and local ... resources.” (Detroit News, Oct. 1)

Hearing on Detroit fires, energy giant

A hearing called by the Michigan Public Service Commission on Sept. 29 in Detroit provided few answers to the internal operations of DTE Energy with regard to complaints that the corporation failed to respond to requests for repair of faulty equipment that subsequently contributed to setting 85 fires in the city on Sept. 7.

Public comment was heard by Daniel Nickerson, an administrative law judge for the MPSC. A representative of the Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility

Shut-offs addressed the hearing and cited newspaper quotes of neighborhood residents who said they had called in requests to repair equipment for several days prior to the fires.

Nickerson acted as if he were unaware of such claims, even though all of these accounts were published in both Detroit dailies, the News and Free Press. Nickerson then said that the only purpose of the hearing was to gather information from those affected by the fires.

DTE Energy is a monopoly in southeastern Michigan. The company has publicly admitted it disconnects both electrical and heating services for more than 150,000 households per year. Over the last 15 months there have been media reports that at least a dozen people have died after their utility services were terminated.

The Rev. Ed Rowe, pastor of Central United Methodist Church in downtown Detroit, told the MPSC, “We need a moratorium on utility shutoffs.” Rowe also told the commission that the utilities should not be owned by a private corporation.

DTE Energy, which claims to have more than \$20 billion in assets, has failed to reinvest its profits into providing maintenance and upgrading its equipment. The corporation has blamed illegal utility hookups for the fires and deaths.

Detroit firefighters have had their ranks trimmed down to 500 personnel. Budget cuts due to massive debt-service payments to the financial institutions are hampering the ability of the city government to respond to emergencies. The Moratorium NOW! Coalition has distrib-

uted leaflets and held rallies, mass meetings and demonstrations demanding that the city administration declare a suspension of debt payments to the banks.

Household income drops 21 percent

The rate of poverty has increased tremendously among all sectors of the working class according to recently released U.S. Census data regarding income and household assets. Poverty rate increases have been most substantial, however, among women, African Americans and Latinos/as.

Michigan has experienced the largest drop in household income of any other state in the U.S. Census data made public on Sept. 29 reveal the state’s median household income fell by more than \$12,000 over the last decade, or the equivalent of cutting \$1,000 from a family’s monthly budget.

According to the Detroit News, “The drop was stunning in both its size and its singularity: No other state came close to losing the estimated 21.3 percent of its median income between 2000 and 2009, and no state endured the 6.5 percent drop seen from 2008 to 2009.”

In Detroit, with a population over 80 percent African-American, one-third of the city’s residents lived in poverty in 2009. (Detroit News, Sept. 29)

For residents of Detroit, the median income declined by 31.3 percent over the last decade. The city ranks fourth among all municipalities in the U.S. most adversely affected by the capitalist economic crisis. □

Stop fracking

Rally demands end to ‘Marcellus madness’

By **Betsey Piette**
Philadelphia

Hundreds of activists from across Pennsylvania rallied and lobbied in the capital of Harrisburg Sept. 22 for a moratorium on natural gas drilling and against gas-industry-sponsored legislation designed to give the green light to unfettered drilling in the Marcellus Shale that sits beneath much of the state.

Protesters carried signs reading “Stop fracking,” “Who can drink gas?” and “Protect Pennsylvania’s water,” while chanting “No free pass for oil and gas!”

The rally was sponsored by Protecting Our Waters, Citizens for Clean Water, the Allegheny Defense Project, the Delaware River Keeper Network, PennEnviron-

ment, Pennsylvania Sierra Club, International WOW, the Responsible Drilling Alliance, the Gas Accountability Project, Campaign for Clean Water and Clean Water Action.

Victoria Switzer, a resident of Dimock, Pa., where 33 water wells were poisoned by Cabot Oil and Gas drilling, stated: “Those in Harrisburg who pose this as a tradeoff between environmental impact and economic boom don’t get it. Water is a non-renewable resource. To trade our most precious resource — water — is Marcellus madness.” (Clean Water Action)

Cabot has drilled 63 gas wells in a nine-square-mile area in Dimock. “There are 100 wells within walking distance of my home,” Switzer noted. Her well and wells of other Dimock residents have tested

positive for chemicals used in the fracking process such as ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, toluene and xylene.

Legislation for the fracking moratorium faces an uphill battle as politicians submit to pressure from the gas industry, which has made political contributions to nearly every state representative and senator, plus both candidates in the gubernatorial race.

But the key drilling issue in Harrisburg is Gov. Ed Rendell’s proposed 5 percent “severance” tax on natural gas, which is projected to raise \$280 million in 2011. It must be voted on by Oct. 1. Similar legislation was withdrawn by Rendell in 2009 under pressure from the gas industry.

State Republicans want to limit the tax to 1.5 percent for the first five years after

a well is opened — usually the well’s most productive period. The gas industry also wants to couple this with the elimination of local zoning control over drilling.

Rendell has indicated he will veto any severance bill of only 1.5 percent. He also told moratorium advocates they were wasting their time, and should back his 5 percent tax plan, which will most likely be blocked by Republicans.

Concerns over the impact of drilling on water supplies are mounting around the state. Drought watches have been posted for 43 counties. Another 24 counties under serious drought warnings are areas where gas drilling companies have been given permits to withdraw millions of gallons of water from creeks and streams every day. □

Indianapolis plant to close as

Auto workers resist GM pay cuts

By Martha Grevatt

Members of United Auto Workers Local 23 at a General Motors stamping plant in Indianapolis have been resisting company demands since last spring for a nearly 50 percent paycut. Both the company and top leaders of the UAW have been exerting heavy pressure on the membership to take huge concessions. In exchange GM — which had planned to close the plant next year — wants instead to sell the plant to parts supplier JD Norman.

Wages and benefits for the Indianapolis workers and for the majority of GM workers are governed by one master agreement between the UAW and the company. It has been this way since the victory of the 1937 sit-down strike in Flint, Mich. Before that, GM had insisted on each plant having its own contract, which allowed the company to pit workers in one plant against workers in another by promising more work to the plant with the lower pay scale. This practice is known as whipsawing.

Recently, GM has been using the threat of closure of a number of plants to try to get workers to agree to separate, inferior local agreements that reduce their hourly rate and/or eliminate raises and bonuses. This breaks up the master agreement and, if not resisted, could drive the wages in UAW plants to below the average wage in this country.

In May the Indianapolis workers voted overwhelmingly against reopening their contract. But in August representatives of the UAW International and Region 3 tried to get workers to accept what JD Norman wanted — a pay drop from \$29 to \$15.50 an hour. The officials were kicked out of the union hall.

In September the UAW Region conducted a mail ballot on the concessionary contract. On Sept. 23, 412 members came to the union hall to mark their ballots “no” and have them notarized. They knew then that a majority had rejected the rotten deal. The entire process was videotaped by Al Benchich, former president of UAW Local 909 at a GM plant near Detroit.

In a leaflet urging workers to vote no, Local 23 member Roy Gomillion argued: “Brothers and Sisters, the issues that we are facing here at our local have a broader effect on our union membership through GM, Ford and Chrysler. If we allow our wages to be cut, this plant can be whipsawed against all the other stamping facilities. That means that any bids for new work can be undercut by this plant if it becomes a scab facility. If we allow this attack on our wages to be successful, where will it end?”

Workers fight union’s concessions

On Sept. 25 the Local 23 Solidarity

Committee held a rally outside the office of Region 3 Director Mo Davison. More than 200 attended, including supporters from Ohio, Michigan and Tennessee. Speakers included Local 23 Shop Chair Greg Clark and member Rondo Jabbar Turner, who are among those leading the fight against concessions, and Local 909 retiree Yvonne Gomillion, mother of Roy Gomillion.

Other speakers were Benchich, Gregg Shotwell of Soldiers of Solidarity, Frank Hammer of Autoworkers Caravan, former UAW Local 235 President Wendy Thompson, and Gary Walkowicz, a UAW Local 600 Committee Member who ran against UAW President Bob King at the Constitutional Convention in June. Hammer read a statement of solidarity from a workers’ leader at a GM-Opel plant in Germany.

The next day, at a meeting sponsored by Autoworkers Caravan, Soldiers of Solidarity, Factory Rat, Warriors of Labor, Supporters of Gary Walkowicz and Coalition of Concerned Citizens — all groups of UAW rank-and-file activists opposing concessions — workers discussed building broader support for the fighting members of UAW Local 23.

On Sept. 27 the American Arbitration Association — which the International hired to conduct the vote without authorization by Local 23, a violation of the UAW Constitution — announced that the con-

cessionary contract sought by GM and JD Norman had been rejected 457 to 96.

Company retaliates, announces plant closing

The solidarity of the workers defeated the paycut and set back the whipsawing GM bosses. The victory was bittersweet, however, as the very next day the company announced plans to wind down operations at the Indianapolis plant.

The pro-company media put out the message that GM has no choice and that the “selfish” workers got what they deserved by insisting on being paid union scale. However, by pushing the “competitive” contract as an alternative to closing the plant, GM bosses have admitted that the closing is not some unfortunate decision necessitated by “overcapacity.”

The company, which made \$2.2 billion in profit in the first half of 2010, had the audacity to subject the members of Local 23 to an ultimatum: your paycheck or your job.

Autoworkers, not only in Indianapolis but wherever they face plant closing threats, have a right to raise the two-fold demand: Hands off our wages and keep our plants open!

The writer is a 23-year Chrysler worker and a member of UAW Local 869. Email: mgrevatt@workers.org.

Freedom Party event launches election campaign

By Dee Knight
Bronx, N.Y.

An exciting event launched the Freedom Party campaign on Oct. 3 at the Church of the Resurrection, which also serves as home to the South Bronx Community Congress. Charles Barron and Ramon Jimenez, candidates for governor and attorney general, respectively, both spoke eloquently about the emerging Black and Latino/a alliance that sees well beyond the Nov. 2 elections to a new “people’s power bloc” that can genuinely fight for and protect the interests of working people in the city and state of New York.

Barron, a former Black Panther, detailed how the money is really available to provide free, high quality education for all, not only at primary and secondary levels, but through bachelor and graduate degrees for young people who want and need a chance to develop themselves fully.

He denounced the school-to-prison-or-war transmission belt that is the reality for most of today’s youth, as well as the crushing burden of debt that is the only prize for those few working-class youth who manage to make it into college.

Barron noted that before Black and Latino/a youth won open admissions to

the City University system in the mid-1970s, this system had completely free tuition and even provided a stipend for books and other expenses. This was true, he said, even during the Depression when unemployment was high and public funds were scarce. Popular mobilizations through unions and unemployed councils were what made this possible.

Barron said that public transit could and should be free and that the Metropolitan Transit Authority should be fired, as it is a profit-oriented appendage affixed atop the transit system to siphon off money.

He pointed out that poor and working people need a single-payer health care system, not a profit-based insurance system that has failed to provide true health care for millions of people. He outlined how a very modest, progressive tax increase on rich people in New York state could easily generate billions of dollars a year to pay for these things. However, he added, they should really be rights for all people in any society.

Both Barron and Jimenez made it clear that mainstream politicians will no longer be able to ignore Black and Latino/a people and take their votes for granted. The Freedom Party does not take these communities for granted, the candidates as-



PHOTO JOHNNIE STEVENS

In August the Freedom Party filed petitions nominating N.Y. Councilperson Charles Barron, Eva Doyle and Ramón Jimenez to run for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general, respectively.

serted, but provides a vehicle for struggle through which poor and working people can represent themselves.

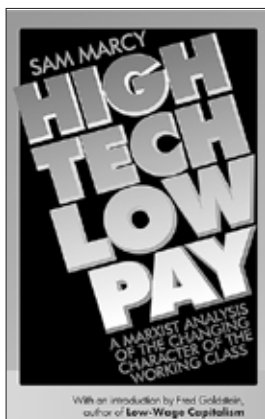
Viola Plummer, a leader of the December 12 Movement and a founder of the

Freedom Party, made it clear that the goal is to build a people’s revolutionary movement. Like Barron’s and Jimenez’s speeches, her remarks were greeted with thunderous applause. □

HIGH TECH, LOW PAY

A Marxist analysis of the changing character of the working class

Twenty years ago Sam Marcy wrote that the scientific-technological revolution is accelerating a shift to lower-paying jobs and to more women, Black and Latino/a workers. A new introduction by Fred Goldstein explains the roots of the current economic crisis, with its disastrous unemployment, that has heightened the need for a working-class resurgence.



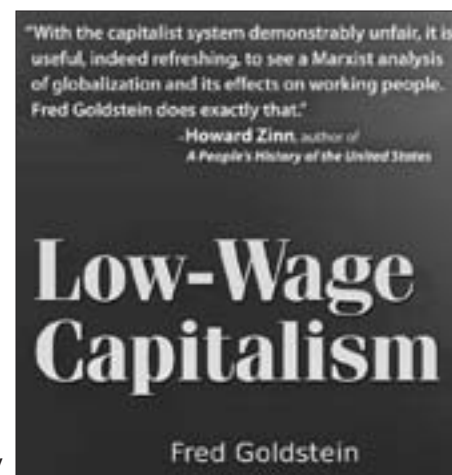
Low-Wage Capitalism

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Fred Goldstein’s book provides an easy-to-read analysis of the roots of the current global economic crisis, its implications for workers and oppressed peoples, and the strategy needed for future struggle.

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Support grows for activists facing FBI repression

By John Catalinotto

The movement is growing ever more united in defense of activists whose homes the FBI invaded on Sept. 24 in a coordinated attack on the anti-imperialist and anti-war movement.

Within 10 days of the initial home invasions, supporters held protest demonstrations in 43 cities, according to an International Action Center release, most in front of FBI, Department of Justice or other government offices. E-mail and telephone protests are set for Oct. 4 and a second wave of pickets and rallies is set for Oct. 5, which is the first day some of the raids' targets are scheduled to appear before a grand jury in Chicago.

The people who live in the seven homes the FBI raided are members or leaders of the Minneapolis Antiwar Committee, whose office was raided; the Palestine Solidarity Group; the Colombia Action Network; the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera (a Colombian political

prisoner held in the U.S.); Students for a Democratic Society; and the Freedom Road Socialist Organization.

Those subpoenaed to testify before grand juries pursuing government "fishing expeditions" face the possibility of being sent to federal prison if they refuse to testify, at least for the duration of the grand jury. While the possibility of repression is real, the FBI has been unable to isolate the activists politically, as these kinds of attacks have sometimes succeeded in doing in the past.



Pittsburg Sept. 28.



Philadelphia protest Sept. 28.



N.Y. Councilperson Charles Barron.

The activists and their supporters set up the Committee to Stop FBI Repression (StopFBI.net) to coordinate the protest actions and news about the case. As of Oct. 4, some 46 organizations had issued messages of solidarity, with links on the Stop FBI site.

In cooperation with the committee, the International Action Center has set up a petition campaign to support those under attack. As of 2 p.m. on Oct. 4, some 2,140 signatures had generated more than 200,000 messages to government figures

demanding an end to the persecution of the activists. (iacenter.org/stopfbi)

One of those whose home was invaded, Jess Sundin, a leader of the Minneapolis Antiwar Committee, said: "These raids and subpoenas are an attack on anti-war and other progressive movements. It is an attack on our freedom to speak, our freedom to assemble with like-minded people, and our freedom to tell the government that their actions and policies are wrong. It is an attempt to clear the way for more wars and

Continued on page 8

Oct. 2 rally showed Potential power of U.S. working class & the

Continued from page 1
commended. The fightback, however imperfect, has to start somewhere, and here was an attempt, however contradictory, at starting it.

Even the name of the Oct. 2 mobilization was not without contradiction. The organizers' decision to call the Oct. 2 rally "One Nation Working Together" was an attempt to counter the divisive and racist message of the Tea Party movement. Instead of "One Nation," a far more inclusive name might have been "one people" or better still, "one class." It's not an insignificant point as the bankers and politicians are gearing up to focus the working class's anger toward China instead of directing it at the capitalist system and the superrich who profit from that system.

The Oct. 2 rally reflected the central contradiction of the working-class movement in the U.S., perhaps more than any event in memory.

The rally was at once the single, biggest mass mobilization of workers by organized labor in a generation. That alone made it an important step forward in the struggle of the working class against the depression-level unemployment, rising poverty and cutbacks that are part and parcel of the biggest global capitalist economic crisis since the 1930s.

At the same time the rally also demonstrated the biggest barrier to the independent development and radicalization of the U.S. working-class movement and its organizations — a process that is absolutely essential to the capacity of the workers to defend themselves as capitalism makes preparations to solve the crisis of its system on the backs of the workers.

This is the political crisis of the U.S. working class.

Challenges facing Oct. 2 rally

The main problem with the rally is that

at the end of the day its principal purpose was to generate enthusiasm amongst the workers for voting for the Democratic Party in the midterm elections in November instead of demanding a real jobs program, a moratorium on home foreclosures and evictions, an immediate end to the wars and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, and other demands that address the real immediate needs of the working class and the poor.

The excitement that the working class, especially the Black working class, felt two years ago over the election of the first African-American president has turned to disappointment and demoralization.

Even while Wall Street and the capitalist media prop up the racist Tea Party and feed reactionary attacks against President Barack Obama, he and his officials have not given the working class any reason to rally behind the Democrats in the elections.

To the contrary, the Obama administration has merely served to give the capitalist assault a thin sugar coating, while at the same time working hard to hold the workers back from fighting in their class interest.

At the early stages of organizing for the Oct. 2 rally, there was some evidence that it reflected at least a partial effort to take on both capitalist parties. When the NAACP and other Black leaders began planning for the rally last spring, there was a lot of talk about the deepening anger with the Obama administration over its failure to do anything about mass home foreclosures and the horrendous unemployment crisis, especially the jobless crisis for Black youth and other youth of color.

Last May, one of the main architects of the rally, George Gresham, the African-American president of the big health care workers union, 1199 SEIU, said, "I always thought we just can't put President Obama into office, but we have to be constantly out



Larry Holmes, Oct. 2.



More than 2,000 people marched from Freedom Plaza to the Jobs rally at the Lincoln Center for jobs and education. Larry Hales, a national organizer for the Oct. 7 Defend Public Education National Actions, told WW: "The student and youth contingent is so important to organize young people who are feeling the economic crisis not only through school closures, increased class sizes, a crumbling infrastructure and threats of privatization, but also through the attacks on the public education system, but who also are dealing with the unemployment the country has ever faced."

‘We have nothing to say to a grand jury’

Targeted activists speak out, vow to continue struggle

**Special to Workers World
Chicago**

Oct. 5 — Representatives of 14 solidarity activists in the Midwest announced this morning that none of them would comply with subpoenas ordering them to testify before a grand jury in Chicago today or Oct. 19. They stood before television cameras and more than 100 supporters in front of the Federal Building where a grand jury was about to be empaneled.

Speaking for the Committee to Stop FBI Repression, Chicago labor and international solidarity activist Stephanie Weiner charged that federal prosecutors are “attacking conduct that clearly falls under the realm of freedom of speech and never could be imagined to be ‘material support for terrorism.’”

“We intend to exercise our right not to participate in this fishing expedition,” declared Weiner.

“The next step is in the hands of the government. But we know what our next step is. We will not be silent. We will continue

to speak out against this unjust investigation, this unjust law, this unjust U.S. foreign policy.”

Weiner cited the repressive use of grand juries throughout U.S. history, against targets such as the abolitionists before the Civil War, the civil rights movement, the American Indian Movement, the Central America solidarity movement, the Puerto Rican independence movement, and the animal rights and environmental movements.

“This grand jury process is an attempt to isolate our right to freedom of political speech and association and the right to advocate for change,” said Weiner. “One does not even need to be opposed to U.S. foreign policy to realize that the U.S. government is working to establish a dangerous precedent.”

“We have nothing to say to a grand jury,” said Joe Iosbaker, Weiner’s spouse and fellow activist. The subpoenaed activists, none of whom have been charged with criminal activity, are claiming their right to

silence under the Fifth Amendment.

“This is not the first time the U.S. government has targeted the Palestinian community in Chicago,” said Miryam Sharif of the American Friends Service Committee. “Before it was Muhammad Salah. Now the target is Hatem, a father and a friend to many of us.” Hatem Abudayyeh is an organizer with the Palestine Solidarity Group in Chicago. Salah, a Palestinian-American resident of Bridgeview, Ill., was acquitted of terrorism charges in 2007, though convicted of some minor offenses, after a 14-year campaign by the U.S. and Israeli governments.

“Palestinians in Chicago like Hatem have friends and family who live under Israeli military rule,” said Sharif. “They are forced to use separate roads from Israelis who live next to them, they have different colored license plates so they can be identified, they live under a different set of laws.”

“Working to change U.S. policy which supports Israel’s military occupation should not be a crime.”

Veteran anti-apartheid activist Prexy Nesbitt, through a written statement, and attorney Jim Fennerty both pointed out that the African National Congress, which led the fight against apartheid in South Africa, was called a terrorist organization by the U.S. government. “Under current law,” said Fennerty, “calling for Nelson Mandela to be freed from prison could get you investigated for aid to terrorism.”

An interfaith statement condemning the FBI raids and grand jury subpoenas, signed so far by more than 30 Muslim, Jewish and Christian organizations and 80 individual religious leaders, was read by the Rev. Dan Dale of the Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ.

Declaring that peacemaking is “a sacred duty,” Dale said that “some of us have visited conflict areas [such as Palestine and Colombia], accompanied by those most affected by the violence.” He noted that those solidarity trips were like the ones the FBI is using as a pretext for its investigation into the targeted activists. □

e political crisis it must overcome

there to support the change we believe in. I remember what Franklin Delano Roosevelt told the labor movement about reforms: ‘Go out and make me do it.’” (New York Times, Oct. 5)

It is significant that the call for the Oct. 2 rally did not initially come from organized labor, but from a group of Black leaders involved in labor and civil rights, and some politicians. Six months ago, the top leadership of the AFL-CIO was opposed to a mass march on Washington and formally rejected a movement for such a march within sections of the labor movement out of the concern that a march would take away the focus from supporting the Democratic Party in the upcoming elections.

The group of Black leaders who initiated the Washington protest engaged in quiet but intense negotiations with top labor leaders for several months to win them over to the rally. It took until August for the AFL-CIO to back the mobilization, and that was only

after an agreement was reached that criticism of Obama would be toned down, and that the main purpose of the rally would be to push for a large electoral turnout.

Even with the political contradictions, clearly such a march would not have been possible a year ago when many top labor leaders maintained that such a demonstration was unnecessary now that the Democrats were in office.

Still, the most helpful, and most honest, message coming from the stage on Oct. 2 should have been to say that the capitalists who run both the Republican and the Democratic parties are coming after the workers with a vengeance and resolve, and that this can only be turned back by the most massive, classwide militant struggles that the U.S. has experienced since the worker uprisings, occupations and battles of the 1930s. Merely being frightened into supporting the Democrats is not the solution.

We can all take a lesson from the heroic workers at the Republic Windows and Doors factory in Chicago, who in December 2008, when faced with a plant closing, did the unthinkable — they occupied their plant and forced Bank of America to make concessions, along with scaring the hell out of every boss and banker in the country.

Like the Republic workers, the more independent and militant forces in the working-class movement are now giving consideration to what course of action must come next to push the working-class movement toward independence and struggle.

Oct. 2 should only be viewed as a beginning. The ever escalating attacks on the workers and the oppressed in the U.S. and across the world, as capitalism and imperialism sink deeper and deeper into crisis, are setting the stage for the emergence of working-class struggle on a higher and higher political level. □



Jobs, yes! War, no!

WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN



WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

pol Memorial, Oct. 2 demanding Education actions and a leader at, which had a large number of ea, demonstrated the ability of — to mobilize young people. It only as students who face school ion, along with the inequalities g with the highest level of youth



Rhode Island Unemployment Council members and allies, Oct. 2.

WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN



Dr. King, Malcolm X, 1964.

Black Workers For Justice on FBI raids ‘We must break our silence!’

The following statement was issued on Sept. 28. Write to BWFJ at P.O. Box 1863, Rocky Mount, N.C. 27802.

As African-American activists engaged in the many struggles for social and economic justice and human rights, we are outraged by the recent FBI raids on anti-war activists in several U.S. cities, alleging they have connections to terrorism.

We’ve seen these FBI and government raids and attacks on African-American leaders and activists during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Medger Evers, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and members of the Black Panther Party, among oth-

ers, were assassinated, jailed, beaten and driven into political exile for leading demonstrations and speaking out against racism, U.S. wars and other injustices

We are further outraged that these raids are happening under the Obama administration, as his election as the first Black U.S. President, grew out of a history of massive protests against racism and unjust wars.

Those who profit from these wars and U.S. support for oppressive governments like Israel and Colombia hope that by having a Black President, it will discourage African Americans from speaking out in protest against these raids, and against attacks on other social justice fighters.

Dr. King said that during times like these, “We must break our silence!”

We know full well that these attacks, while starting against anti-war activists, are aimed at all activists that organize and mobilize against the many injustices caused by a system that places profits and domination over human needs.

It’s time for all struggles against injustice and for human rights in the U.S. and internationally to close ranks against these attacks and against the rapidly growing attack on all democratic rights that is shaping the direction of U.S. society. They come for the anti-war activists today; and they will come for us tomorrow. Stop the raids! □

Labor Council resolution denounces FBI raids

Following are edited excerpts from a resolution adopted unanimously by the San Francisco Labor Council delegates’ meeting on Sept. 27.

Whereas, early morning Sept. 24 in coordinated raids, FBI agents entered ... homes and offices of trade union and anti-war activists in Minneapolis and Chicago, confiscating crates full of computers, books, documents, notebooks, cell phones, passports, children’s drawings, photos of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, videos and personal belongings. The FBI also raided offices of the Twin Cities Anti-war Committee, seizing computers; handed out subpoenas to testify before a federal grand jury to [at least] 11 activists in Illinois, Minnesota and Michigan; and paid harassment visits to others in Wisconsin, California and North Carolina; and

Whereas, one target of the raids was the home of Joe Iosbaker, chief steward and executive board member of Service Employees Local 73 in Chicago, where he has led struggles at the University of Illinois for employee rights and pay equity. ... and

Whereas, the majority of those targeted by the FBI raids had participated in anti-war protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn.,

SAN FRANCISCO

which resulted in hundreds of beatings and arrests [with almost all charges subsequently dropped]. Many of those targeted ... were involved in humanitarian solidarity work with labor and popular movements in Colombia — “the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist” — whose U.S.-funded government has been condemned by the AFL-CIO and internationally for the systematic assassination of hundreds of trade unionists; and

Whereas, the nationally coordinated dawn raids and fishing expedition mark a new and dangerous chapter in the protracted assault on the First Amendment rights of every union fighter, solidarity activist or anti-war campaigner, which began with 9/11 and the ... Patriot Act. The raids came only four days after a scathing report by the Department of Justice Inspector General that soundly criticized the FBI for targeting domestic groups such as Greenpeace and the Thomas Merton Center from 2002-06. In 2008, according to a 300-page report obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, the FBI trailed a

group of students in Iowa City to parks, libraries, bars and restaurants, and went through their trash. This time the FBI is using the pretext of investigating “terrorism” in an attempt to intimidate activists.

Therefore be it resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council denounce the Sept. 24 FBI raids on the homes and offices of trade union, solidarity and anti-war activists in Minneapolis, Chicago and elsewhere; the confiscation of computers and personal belongings; and the issuance of grand jury subpoenas. This has all the earmarks of a fishing expedition. The FBI raids are reminiscent of the Palmer Raids,

McCarthy hearings, J. Edgar Hoover, and COINTELPRO, and mark a new and dangerous chapter in the protracted assault on ... First Amendment rights. ... ;

And be it further resolved, that this Council make the following demands:

1. Stop the repression against trade union, anti-war and international solidarity activists.
2. Immediately return all confiscated materials: computers, cell phones, papers, documents, personal belongings, etc.
3. End the Grand Jury proceedings and FBI raids against trade union, anti-war and international solidarity activists. □

National Network on Cuba condemns FBI actions

The National Network on Cuba protests the ... FBI raids on the homes and offices of international solidarity and anti-war activists in Chicago and Minneapolis. The justification was an attempt to collect evidence of “material support” of terrorism. ...

At the same time that the FBI is harassing anti-war activists, it refuses to investigate, and, in fact, is supporting and protecting the terrorists who have been attacking the sovereign Cuban nation for 50 years. These international terrorists include Luis Posada Carriles, who is responsible for the 1976 bombing of a ci-

vilian Cuban flight [killing] all 73 aboard. Posada brazenly walks the streets of Miami along with fellow terrorist Orlando Bosch, bragging of their criminal history and with no worry of FBI intervention.

These raids represent a threat to those, including Cuba solidarity activists, who demand their First Amendment rights. The dangerous practice of targeting activists under the pretext of preventing terrorism must not be allowed to continue. We must all defend our civil rights to engage in peace, justice and solidarity actions. We urge protests and condemnation of the FBI abuse of power. □

A call for unity and solidarity

FIST ‘stands shoulder to shoulder’ with activists



Fight Imperialism, Stand Together joins all progressive groups — be they anti-war, anti-imperialist, anti-racist or left generally — in denouncing the raids against anti-imperialist activists in Minnesota and Illinois, and condemns the grand jury subpoenas served on activists in Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota and any other acts the FBI engaged in to intimidate the Freedom Road Socialist Organization, Students for a Democratic Society, the Palestine Solidarity Group, the Columbia Action Network and others.

This blatant aggression against forces on the left including progressive and revolutionary organizations is a clear threat against all who have taken a consistent anti-imperialist position, have been in support of national liberation struggles around the world, and who work to expose the lies of the U.S. government and struggle for a better world free from the system from which imperialism has grown.

U.S. policies in Colombia, Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere and resistance to those policies have influenced the state’s repressive actions. The overall political climate in response to the severe economic downturn, both here in the U.S. and around the world, can’t be divorced from this act of aggression against the left.

The revolutionary youth group FIST stands in solidarity with our friends and calls for solidarity from all left and progressive forces no matter what differences may exist. It is only our solidarity with one another that can halt any future attacks that the FBI or other police and intelligence agencies may launch to weaken and discredit the burgeoning left movement.

At such a crucial moment we must stand shoulder to shoulder and trumpet the old union motto, “An injury to one is an injury to all.”

**Hands off FRSO and SDS!
Long live international solidarity!
All power to the people! □**

Solidarity from India

Lok Morcha (Peoples’ Front), a democratic revolutionary organization of the struggling people of Punjab, India, wedded to anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism, strongly condemns the FBI raids on anti-war and solidarity activists in the U.S.

The U.S. rulers, aided and abetted by corporate giants and at their behest, are waging unjust and aggressive wars against the people of various countries in the world, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and Latin American countries, to plunder their natural resources and wealth.

In the garb of a war on terrorism, the U.S. rulers have in fact launched a war against their own people as well as the people of the world. They are crushing the democratic rights of the American [U.S.] people. This deserves the strongest condemnation.

Being thousands of kilometers away from you, we cannot physically join you in this dark hour, but we will espouse your cause amongst the people of India and expose the perfidy of U.S. rulers.

**Amolak Singh, General Secretary
N.K. Jeet, President**

Support grows for activists

Continued from page 6

occupations of other countries by the U.S. military.”

Protests in dozens of cities

It was apparent that the entire anti-imperialist, anti-racist and anti-war movement also saw it that way, as did

progressive legal organizations like the National Lawyers Guild and the Committee for Constitutional Rights and numerous unions and labor councils.

Since the demonstrations Workers World reported in our last issue, there have been actions in dozens of cities. Among

Tuition hikes, corruption spur struggle

University of Illinois students shut down trustees meeting

By Ben Rothschild
Urbana, Ill.

On Sept. 23, the Board of Trustees for the University of Illinois met in Urbana, on the flagship state university campus, to approve budgetary operations for fiscal year 2011. The University of Illinois has come under recent criticism for its mismanagement of university funds and mistreatment of university employees.

Over the summer, the Board of Trustees hiked tuition by 9.5 percent, now making students pay \$10,386 per year. Diversity on campus has also decreased. Project 500, a university initiative that emerged from the student struggles of the late 1960s, had the goal of recruiting 500 Black and Latino/a students into each freshmen class. Last year, for the first time in 40 years, the university failed to meet that goal.

When the Board of Trustees decided to hold their September meeting in Urbana, students and workers held multiple protests throughout the day. In the morning, members of the Graduate Employees Organization and Service Employees unions held a 50-person picket as the board members entered the building where they were meeting.

At noon, campus unions and student groups held a large rally, in which about 150 people attended to speak out against the degeneration of public education.

At 3 p.m., graduate and undergraduate students attempted to pack the room for the public comment session. Unfor-

tunately, the Board of Trustees picked a small room to meet in and half the students were not allowed in. They were forced to watch the meeting from an overflow room.

Students addressed the board and spoke passionately about tuition rates, the drop in minority enrollment, and tuition waiver security for graduate students. They requested responses from the Board of Trustees, specifically asking for a tuition freeze.

When the Board of Trustees refused to answer students' questions, the students broke out chanting, "Whose university? Our university!" and "What do we want? Tuition freeze! When do we want it? Now!"

The meeting was effectively over. Within 15 seconds of the start of the chants, board members started leaving the room. As they exited, the students that had not been allowed in had lined the halls, wearing white bandannas over their faces with writing on them that said "Project 500" and "Tuition Freeze Now!"

In November 2009, the GEO went on strike over tuition waivers. More than a thousand people came out to the quad to participate in the protests. Over the course of two days, they attempted to shut down four major buildings on campus, as a work stoppage. Because of pressure from students, parents and members of the community, the GEO won their demands of tuition waiver security, wages and health care benefits.

In the past year, the University of Illinois has accumulated a long list of

grievances from students and workers. The most well-known episode of corruption happened one year ago. Members of the Board of Trustees, the chancellor, the president, and many politicians in Springfield were found to be participating in a scandalous admissions process, whereby unqualified applicants would be accepted on the basis of political clout. Many members of the Board of Trustees, the president and the chancellor all stepped down over the controversy.

In March, the administration doled out a \$273,500 retirement bonus package for the chancellor of the Springfield campus, Richard Ringeisen. On May 20, the day that the university hiked tuition, they also approved a \$170,000 salary increase for the new president, Michael Hogan. He now makes \$620,000 per year.

The administration also tried to use \$100,000 worth of student fees to build a sculpture of retired university president Stanley Ikenberry. After the Chicago Tribune started investigating the matter and asking questions, the university changed its mind and decided not to spend the money, while one trustee still maintained that \$100,000 was a "reasonable" price for a piece of art. Joseph White, the corrupt former president, is currently being paid \$350,000 to work for the university and is teaching a course on "business ethics."



PHOTO: FIGHT BACK! NEWS

Students lined the halls, wearing bandannas which say, "Project 500" and "Freeze Tuition Now."

None of these episodes compare with the real problem: the vastly inadequate state government in Springfield. It is currently \$13 billion in the red. While the administration constantly tries to pass the buck to the state government, the corruption has clearly seeped down through all levels.

On Sept. 23 students sent a clear message to the Board of Trustees that they will not tolerate their mismanagement of public education.

This article was originally published by www.FightBackNews.org. The writer is a member of the Undergraduate-Graduate Alliance.

Strikes, protests as workers' anger grows in Europe

By G. Dunkel

Sept. 29 was a day of worker protests throughout Europe. Thirty countries had some sort of protest over their respective government's attempts to cut wages, benefits, pensions — and other gains that workers have won in a century of struggle — in order to solve the economic crisis.

Continued from page 8

them were Houston, Atlanta, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, Denver, New York and Detroit. Also Newark, N.J.; Gainesville, Fla.; Tucson, Ariz.; Pittsburgh, and Milwaukee. The following summarizes some of the direct reports.

In Chicago, some 500 people picketed and chanted outside Chicago FBI Headquarters on Sept. 28, where they expressed special support for the three Chicago activists targeted. Among the crowd were trade unionists, students, and anti-war and Palestine solidarity activists, all outraged by the FBI raids. Stephanie Weiner and Joe Iosbaker, whose home was raided the morning of Sept. 24 and who are two of the 12 people handed subpoenas, were at the protest, joined by their son Tre, according to a story on FightBack.news.

In Tucson, Ariz., pedestrians and motorists passing by were hearing about the raids for the first time but were making encouraging comments to the people picketing the Federal Building, said Paul Teitelbaum. "When you say, 'Stop the raids!' in Arizona, most people think about ICE raids against the undocumented.

The sharpest protests took place in Spain, where workers shut down almost all industrial production and a great deal of transportation, including air travel, and closed 70 percent of government services; in Belgium, where workers from all over Europe gathered to march through Brussels, the city which houses the headquarters of the European Union; and in Greece, the country in

ed. The use of the FBI to target a different group within the working class demonstrates that it really is a class issue."

In New York City on Sept. 28 nearly 200 people marched around the Federal Building and then gathered in front for a short rally initiated by the IAC. Charles Barron, the Freedom Party candidate for governor, made a sharp attack on FBI repression. Barron was among the dozen or so representatives of the New York movement who addressed the crowd.

In San Francisco on Sept. 28 more than 150 activists picketed in front of the San Francisco Federal Building in a protest organized by the United National Anti-War Committee. Reflecting the support from that city's labor movement, Dave Welsh read a support statement from the San Francisco Labor Council. Darah from the Union of Filipino Students at San Francisco State University and Dr. Masao Suzuki, a professor from Skyline College and an activist from San Jose, also spoke, reports Judy Greenberg.

Supporters were also able to get out much information on this struggle at the massive workers' gathering in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 2. □

Europe hardest hit by the economic crisis with a debt load of over \$300 billion.

The general strike that the two main unions, Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) and Unión General de los Trabajadores (UGT), called in Spain was the first since 2002 and marked a break between the unions and the Socialist Party of José Luis Zapatero, which runs the government. The CCOO and the UGT wanted to protest austerity measures that include pay cuts for civil servants and making it easier and cheaper for companies to fire their workers.

"This strike is more necessary than ever," one union representative, Roberto Tornamira, on a picket line near Madrid's elegant Plaza de Cibeles, told the Associated Press.

Striking workers staged a sit-in outside a bus garage in the Spanish capital, screaming "scabs" at drivers trying to get out. Some strikers scuffled with police. Spanish National Radio reported 11 people injured nationwide.

"We are here to explain to our colleagues the reason for the strike and urge them to take part and not work," said one striker, Mercedes Ramírez, amid a din of whistles and bullhorns.

Even Spanish grandparents struck Sept. 29. Since more than half of all Spanish grandparents look after their grandchildren every day, Manuel Pastrana, the Andalusian leader of the UGT, called on them to strike, saying, "We want grandparents to strike to prove they are a key part of the way this country functions." (The Daily Telegram, Sept. 27)

The 100,000 workers who marched in Brussels came from over two dozen countries, ranging from Ireland and Scotland

to Poland. The European Commission is currently considering rules to force all the countries in the EU to keep their spending down, even if it means imposing austerity.

Belgian cops arrested 218 "troublemakers" during the march, but most of them were later released.

"This is the start of the fight, not the end," said John Monks, general secretary of the European Trades Union Confederation, which organized the events.

"Why should the workers have to bear all the costs of this crisis?" asked Kazimierz Grajczarek, 57, a miner from Bielsko-Biala in Poland, who came to Brussels by bus. "They give all the money to the banks and we have to carry the costs." (The Guardian, Sept. 30)

In Greece, the railroad workers called a three-day strike beginning on Sept. 27. Hospitals and doctors went to emergency services only on Sept. 29 and there were rolling strikes in mass transit. Both major trade union confederations organized a big rally of 100,000 people in front of the EU offices. These actions amplified the effects of the truckers' strike, which was in its third week.

Over 3 million people marched in France on Oct. 2 to protest the proposal of the Sarkozy government to raise the age when people can retire. The marches and rallies took place in hundreds of places, from small islands off France's western coast to all its major cities. A notable feature of the marches, according to the French television station TV2, was the large participation of youth, many from a West or North African background, who see increasing the retirement age as increasing youth unemployment. □

A jobs bill? Baloney!

Two days before the huge jobs and justice rally in Washington, D.C., the House on Sept. 29 threw a curve ball and called it a jobs bill. Republicans and Democrats finally got together and voted to expand the powers of the Obama administration. But what for?

To create jobs for the millions of unemployed? To stop the layoffs of public workers and the slashing of state budgets? To extend jobless benefits? To stop foreclosures and evictions?

None of the above. They voted to give the government more authority to put tariffs on imports from China.

After three depression years of doing nothing about the biggest problem facing the country — the refusal of bosses to hire workers and pay them decent wages — the politicians of both parties think they can say: “See! We’ve finally done something about jobs!” And just in time for the rally.

If this measure becomes law, it will do nothing to create jobs for workers in the United States.

For decades, big corporations have moved their operations to low-wage countries in search of higher profits. This year, workers’ wages actually increased significantly in China. So some U.S. corporations are already threatening to move to other countries where workers are paid less.

The problem is not China but our own corporate bosses and bankers. They sit on trillions of dollars and won’t invest them here unless they’re guaranteed a huge profit — while they throw workers by the millions to the wolves.

Election won’t bring jobs or justice

It’s time for workers to fight. This is a true crisis. Long-term unemployment is

the highest since the Depression. Millions are losing their jobs, homes, health care and pensions. Poverty and homelessness are soaring. Government “stimulus” hasn’t made a dent — the money has gone to banks and corporations.

Workers all over the world are protesting layoffs and cutbacks. China-bashing is just a diversion to make us fight other workers instead of the greedy capitalists.

Labor of every hue, gender and creed needs the broadest solidarity at home and abroad to fight this global system. We must vigorously reject racism, sexism, anti-gay bigotry, attacks on Muslims and scapegoating of undocumented immigrants.

The elections are a waste of union money. We’ve already got a Democratic Congress and White House, and what have they done? The bosses and capitalist politicians won’t change anything until there is an independent, militant struggle by the workers — which is how labor got organized in the first place. That’s where union funds should be going.

- We need to demand and fight for:
- A real government jobs program that hires millions of unemployed and pays prevailing wages, like the Works Progress Administration of the 1930s.
 - A shorter workweek with no cut in pay. With new technology, worker productivity goes way up. We produce more, but the bosses pay us less and cut our jobs! Let’s revive the old union slogan of 30 for 40 — 30 hours’ work for 40 hours’ pay.
 - Money for jobs and social services, not for wars abroad and repression at home. Stop the Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids! Expand mass transit, education and a green infrastructure so the youth will have a future.

This editorial was distributed at the Oct. 2 rally in Washington.

MUNDO OBRERO

Uniendo las luchas: Asamblea Popular del Bronx

Continúa de página 12

“estímulo”?, Preguntó Owen Rogers de la Operación Resistencia, que ha estado luchando durante años para conseguir puestos de trabajo para gente de color en la industria de la construcción. Mostró cómo miles de millones de dólares destinados a proyectos de Nueva York “no tuvieron ningún efecto en nuestras comunidades”. Él llamó por un programa masivo para reconstruir la infraestructura y proporcionar puestos de trabajo para las comunidades con mayor desempleo.

Ninguna ilusión sobre el capitalismo

Tony Gronowicz, candidato a alcalde por el Partido Verde en 2005, señaló que Michael Bloomberg es el alcalde más rico de toda la historia. Hizo un llamamiento para asaltar los portillos giratorios si se aumentan las tarifas de transporte. n trabajador del Cementerio Woodlawn habló sobre la formación del Conjunto de Hermanos para luchar contra el acoso racista en el trabajo. Ningún político representa a estos trabajadores, dijo. “Por eso tenemos que unirnos y representarnos a nosotros mismos”.

Charles Jenkins del Local 100 del Sindicato de Trabajadores/as del Transporte

(TWU por sus siglas en inglés) dijo que los/as presentes tenían “una oportunidad de llevar nuestro mensaje a la nación” en la manifestación del 2 de octubre en Washington, e informó a la gente cómo podría registrarse para ir en los autobuses auspiciados por los sindicatos.

Después de que los/as participantes se reunieron en sub grupos para enfocarse en cuestiones particulares, se reportaron las recomendaciones para continuar la lucha. Algunas recomendaciones incluyeron asistir a la manifestación del 2 de octubre para demandar empleos y los derechos de inmigrantes, y continuar montando asambleas populares como fuentes alternativas de poder.

Ninguna ilusión sobre el capitalismo fue expresada en este evento totalmente de la clase trabajadora. Hubo discusiones abiertas sobre cómo los movimientos populares necesitan prepararse para la reorganización general revolucionaria de la sociedad.

El Partido Workers World/Mundo Obrero tuvo una mesa de literatura y conferenciantes que han estado involucrados/as profundamente en las luchas que se describieron. □

Coffee break chatter on

What’s up with ‘Buy America’?

By Gavrielle Gemma

Carlos: Hey, Sue. I went to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 2 to fight for jobs. It was a great crowd, we were ready to fight, but someone tried to sell me a T-shirt that said, “Buy America, Stop China.”

Sue: Well, won’t that help create jobs?

Carlos: Nope. It just supports big corporations in their international competition for profits. It never worked before, and it’s dangerous and can lead to wars. These companies never turn around and hire when they’re rolling in profits like they are now.

Sue: You mean the way General Motors got bailout money and then closed more plants?

Carlos: Yeah. And it’s worse than that. U.S. banks and companies go all around the world to find where labor is cheapest. When workers in those countries rise up, the U.S. government invades or supports dictators to keep the status quo. Like in Honduras when an illegal coup took over last year to prevent workers from organizing.

Sue: I heard workers all over Bangladesh have fought against low wages paid by U.S. companies. I see your point. We should unite with workers around the world to raise wages instead of supporting companies who want to lower wages anywhere.

Carlos: I just don’t get how our unions could buy into all this anti-China stuff.

Sue: But aren’t we losing jobs because of China? Hey, here’s Lucy and Abdul. Let’s see what they think.

Lucy: I’ll tell you what I think. I think we’re losing jobs because capitalism needs a global army of the unemployed so that we are in competition with each other and they can drive down wages. We’re losing jobs despite record profits, because they’re gambling on the stock market instead of hiring us to do productive, critical work that is sorely needed.

Abdul: We’re losing jobs because we’re so productive as workers that we overproduce what can be sold for a profit, even if it’s needed. We’re losing jobs because we’re unemployed or our wages are too low, and we can’t buy the products other workers are making. The more the world’s workers produce, the worse it gets for us under capitalism!

Sue: I guess you’re right. For years our unions supported ‘Buy America’ corporate schemes — and you know what? It only strengthened companies that turned around and laid us off. Why in hell should we do that again?

Abdul: It’s perfectly legal for U.S. companies to run away to other countries. The U.S. government even gives our tax money to subsidize them and troops to protect them. Then the companies put the profits in offshore accounts and pay no taxes on them.

Sue: You know what makes me mad? The banks are making record profits and have got billions of our tax dollars, but still no jobs. Homes are foreclosed while tax money is given to the banks. Do bankers really run this country?

Abdul: Corporations are getting zero-percent-interest loans using our tax money and then they cut jobs. The CEOs should be in jail!

Carlos: Unemployment, rising poverty for us, while they’re sipping \$10,000 bottles of champagne and celebrating their ‘recovery.’ The bankers are sitting on mountains of money our labor created and gambling with it on the stock market rather than putting us to work.

Lucy: Why is that even legal? But doesn’t China unfairly manipulate currency while we have free trade? The government just passed a so-called jobs bill, but it’s all about tariffs on Chinese imports.

Sue: Oh great, another bill that won’t produce a single job, just distract us from the real causes of unemployment.

Carlos: There’s no such thing as free or fair trade. The U.S. forces every country to trade in U.S. dollars. Is that fair? To get dollars other countries have to export to the U.S. Bankers in the U.S. trade currency and sometimes impoverish entire countries. U.S. capitalists want no restrictions on their actions, then they whine about other countries and we’re supposed to run to their aid.

Abdul: Capitalism depends on making profit off the labor of workers because we produce much more than we ever get in return. A few capitalists steal most of the product of our labor, here and around the world. It’s called “profit.”

Carlos: Imagine if we all got together, including immigrant workers and the unemployed and youth, and demanded a national jobs program. Workers and the unemployed did that in the 1930s. They fought for and they won the WPA. We can do that. There’s plenty of money in the federal treasury, it’s just not going to the people.

Lucy: Yeah, or go on strike like they just did in France, Greece, Spain and Bangladesh. The workers there are saying to the capitalists, “It’s your deficit not ours.” We ought to do the same here.

Carlos, Sue and Abdul: Sounds good to us! □

TOP TEN

Tea Party’s secret slogans to the workers:

1. Don’t tread on us; we’ll tread on you.
2. If we give enough money to the superrich, some of it will trickle down to you.
3. Ask not what your country can do for you; rather, ask what your country can do for me.
4. The Golden Rule is that the rich have the gold, so we make the rules.
5. Give us liberty or give us money. (Really just the money.)
6. No taxation for us, no representation for you.
7. We’d like you to march right into the voting booth and give your power to politicians ...
8. ... who maybe won’t sell you out — *this time*.
9. The Republicans haven’t sold you out in two years; all we ask for is another opportunity.
10. The workers have not yet begun to fight, and we love that.

Email: pwilcox@workers.org — Paul Wilcox

U.S. attacks create resistance in Pakistan

By Gene Clancy

U.S. efforts to supply its troops and the puppet regime in Afghanistan came to a standstill on Sept. 30. Convoys of trucks bearing fuel and other supplies were backed up for hundreds of miles on the long supply route that runs from Karachi, the main port of Pakistan, to the mountain passes leading into Afghanistan.

Twenty-seven large fuel tankers blazed out of control after being attacked by militants. The main reason for the hold-up, however, was that the government of Pakistan had closed off the Khyber Pass, in response to a U.S. armed incursion across the border with Afghanistan that killed three Pakistani border guards.

In recent weeks the U.S. military has stepped up its deadly attacks on Pakistan

by both drone aircraft and armed helicopters carrying U.S. troops. There have been more than 20 strikes by CIA-operated drones since Sept. 1, counter-terrorism officials said, the highest monthly total in the nearly nine years since the U.S. began carrying out such attacks. (Los Angeles Times, Sept. 28)

As its highly touted “surge” policy has bogged down, the Pentagon has frantically lashed out by attacking so-called insurgent bases in Pakistan, claiming the right of “hot pursuit” after being attacked.

No mention is made by the corporate-owned media of the fact that the “attacks” are on forces which illegally occupy Afghanistan or that the drones are remotely controlled from halfway around the world at bases in the continental U.S.

The U.S. claims to have a secret agree-

ment in which the Pakistanis are supposed to ignore these incursions into their sovereign territory as well as the killing of Pakistani citizens. Pakistan has denied that any such agreement exists. The killing of the border guards has raised that disagreement into a full-blown crisis.

Ninety percent of military supplies for the NATO forces in Afghanistan travel through Pakistan, 75 percent though the Khyber Pass via Peshawar in the Northwest Federated Provinces. Attempts to broaden the supply routes through Central Asia have been unsuccessful. The only other major seaport capable of supplying the NATO contingents is the Iranian port of Chabahar. The vulnerability of the U.S. supply lines was shown in early 2009 when militants successfully cut off the Khyber Pass temporarily by

blowing up a key bridge.

It is obvious to the Pentagon planners that they cannot “succeed” in Afghanistan without the assistance of Pakistan. But according to a Pew Research Poll released on July 30, the vast majority of Pakistanis consider the U.S. to be an “enemy country” and oppose helping the NATO mission in Afghanistan.

Many Pakistanis have expressed outrage that the government of Pakistan only reacted forcefully when members of their own armed forces were killed after months of tolerating murderous air strikes on their homeland.

People in the U.S. and around the world need to join in solidarity with the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan and demand an immediate end to the illegal NATO war and occupation of Afghanistan. □

Mass protests stop police coup in Ecuador

Continued from page 1
in an Oct. 4 interview.

“The CTE has been firm about the latest developments,” said Sarango. “The CTE follows the political position of the Communist Party, and as you saw, we were on the streets responding against those opportunist sectors that wanted to take power through a coup.

“We are very clear about the position, the character of the Citizens’ Revolution and President Correa; we understand it is not a truly leftist government, but a reformist government with clear intentions to go forward to the left. It is up to us, the social movements, the left parties, to support and above all, organize so that the real conditions are set so that the government does not go to the right, because it is a government that although not left, has not closed the doors to the sectors from the left.

“In that sense, we, the left, must do the political-organizational work. We are very clear about that.”

It was an assassination attempt

Now for the events of Sept. 30.

Using the excuse that a new law changed some of their salaries and benefits, a sector of the national police rebelled against Correa’s government on Sept. 30. Correa went to the Police Regiment building in an attempt to negotiate with these disaffected police. Police then rioted, shouting insults at Correa. They called for his resignation and praised former President Lucio Gutiérrez.

Many Ecuadoreans consider Gutiérrez a traitor, because he had run on a progressive platform opposing neoliberal policies, but almost immediately reversed himself, embracing a free trade agreement with George Bush. A mass uprising ejected Gutiérrez in 2005.

An angry police mob surrounded Correa and his small team of bodyguards as they left the building, throwing tear gas canisters at his head and attempting to suffocate him by removing his gas mask. While the president was walking with a cane because of a recent knee surgery, they also tried to hit his knees. Correa’s bodyguards were able to rush him to the hospital, where he was surrounded by rioting police who threatened to kill him.

When people learned what had happened, thousands began gathering in front of the Carondelet Presidential Palace, hoping to liberate him. Many also defied pepper and tear gas to surround the rioting police at the hospital.

The army was slower to respond. Correa had said he wanted the army to hold off to prevent a bloodbath, but that the

generals stood silently for so long while their President was in real danger indicates ambivalence. Correa’s personal guard and hospital personnel prevented any attack on him.

Only as night fell, did some 600 elite troops storm into the hospital while the police fired at them. Police continued shooting at an armored van removing Correa, hitting it with five bullets and killing one of his guards when a powerful shell perforated his bulletproof vest. As of Oct. 4 CNNE reported 10 deaths, including a young Correa supporter.

Destabilizing forces

As the police were rioting in Quito, rightist political and social groups around the country were calling for a revolt against the government. They closed Quito’s international airport and the main highways to the capital. Privately owned media misreported the events. One of Lucio Gutiérrez’s lawyers tried to silence the government’s national TV, storming into TV Ecuador’s offices and breaking their glass doors.

Gutiérrez, who has opposed Correa since the latter won the 2006 presidential elections, called for the dissolution of the National Assembly and the holding of immediate presidential elections. Correa was re-elected in 2009.

But in spite of this climate of chaos, the people around the country rallied in support of their president, passionately defending the Constitution and their Revolución Ciudadana (Citizens’ Revolution).

Popular and international response

The governments in Latin America quickly condemned the coup attempt. UNASUR called an emergency meeting for Oct. 1. The Organization of American States met urgently in Washington. Condemning the coup were not only Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia, but even the rightist regimes in Peru and Colombia were constrained to criticize the police revolt. Washington, albeit lukewarmly, was also forced to condemn the actions against Correa.

Throughout Latin America people held immediate demonstrations in many countries, including a massive one in Venezuela. Organizations in many countries sent messages of support to Correa, including one from the International Action Center.

At a press conference at the United Nations Ecuadorean Mission a day later on Oct. 1, attended by members of the Spanish language media, some 85 members of the New York metropolitan area Ecuadorean and Latin American communities and four Ecuadorean consuls from New York, Connecticut and New Jersey condemned

the police actions, calling them a coup attempt. Members of the International Action Center’s Latin America and Caribbean Solidarity Committee participated.

The Ecuadoreans distributed copies of their Constitution, which guarantees the right of Ecuadoreans to control their own land, as well as guaranteeing the rights of the Indigenous peoples. The Ecuadorean Constitution is a small booklet imprinted with the statement, “from the Citizens’ Revolution with infinite love.”

After the press conference, 100 people marched to the United Nations, where they stood in front of the General Assembly building waving Ecuadorean flags and chanting, “¡El pueblo unido, jamás será vencido!” (The people united will never be defeated!) and “¡Correa, amigo, el pueblo está contigo!” (Correa, friend, the people are with you!)

Back at the Ecuadorean Mission to the United Nations, Ambassador Francisco Carrión told some of those invited, “History was made today in Ecuador. The people were unafraid. They demonstrated their love for their president and their nation. A coup cannot happen again in Ecuador,” he said.

“Democracy and constitutional law have prevailed, and the Ecuadorean people were vigilant in the face of this threat to their sovereignty. Those who are responsible will be punished.”

Why the coup attempt?

The current government of Ecuador is on imperialism’s hit list. Just like ALBA members Bolivia in 2008, Venezuela in

2003 and Honduras in 2009, the pro-U.S. oligarchy in Ecuador wants no part of a participatory democracy where the government aids the most dispossessed sectors of society. They want a regime working directly for the oligarchy’s or transnational corporations’ interests.

Since Correa took office, there have been important and progressive changes in Ecuador. The government cancelled the Pentagon’s contract for the use of a military base in Manta. It enacted a new very progressive pro-people constitution. And Correa has refused to accept a “free trade” agreement with the U.S. Ecuador even joined the ALBA.

U.S. imperialism still holds much power in Ecuador as the country’s main trading partner and financier and trainer of Ecuador’s police force. Washington’s CIA-related organizations like USAID have given millions of dollars to so-called “pro-Democracy” organizations in Ecuador that seek the ouster of Correa. The Voice of America has many affiliated stations throughout Ecuador that feed disinformation about the government to the poor and the Indigenous masses, trying to turn them against President Correa.

Whether or not Washington was “actively” involved in this attempt, its support for the Honduran coup and the current government of illegitimate Porfirio Lobo has encouraged the oligarchy and right-wing forces in Ecuador and in the rest of the region.

NYC WW correspondent Heather Cottin contributed to this article.

Next: U.S. role in Ecuador.

WWP Regional Southern Conference: Durham, N.C., Oct. 23

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Uniando las luchas: Asamblea Popular del Bronx

Por Deirdre Griswold
Bronx, N.Y.

Muchos/as activistas comunitarios/as llenaron el salón de reuniones el 25 de septiembre en la primera sesión de la Asamblea Popular del Bronx pro trabajos y sobrevivencia económica. Fueron para intercambiar información sobre cómo organizar independientemente y para ampliar sus vínculos con los movimientos nacionales de justicia social y económica.

La asamblea se celebró en el histórico Colegio Comunitario Hostos, escenario de una huelga de ocupación por 40 días en 1974 que evitó que los funcionarios lo cerraran. El conocimiento de ese pasado militante aún resuena hoy en el estudiantado y el profesorado de mayoría latina y negra.

Orador/a tras orador/a hablaron de la lucha por aliviar la carga aplastante de la pobreza, el desempleo y la represión racista en el Bronx. Este condado de la ciudad de Nueva York no está geográficamente lejos de Wall Street, donde miles de millones de dólares en acciones y bonos se negocian todos los días.

Pero en el Sur del Bronx se encuentra el distrito congresional más pobre de los Estados Unidos, donde el 27 por ciento de la población vive por debajo del nivel de pobreza, explicó la Reverenda Lydia Lebrón Rivera al abrir la reunión.

Grandes pancartas en las paredes anunciando el “Congreso de la Comunidad del Sur del Bronx”, “Un programa verdadero de empleos ahora-Movimiento pro Rescate del Pueblo (BOPM)”, “Vote por el Partido de la Libertad” e “Igualdad de derechos para todos/as los/as trabajadores/as - Coalición 1 de mayo”, mostró que la Asamblea Popular había reunido no sólo a individuos, sino también a las organizaciones y coaliciones comunitarias existentes. Estos grupos han llevado a cabo fuertes luchas por la vivienda, empleos, transporte público, mejor educación pública y el fin a la represión policial y gubernamental contra la gente de color e inmigrantes.

Con aplausos se recibió al co-moderador Larry Holmes, del BOPM cuando explicó que el movimiento de la Asamblea Popular estaba creciendo a nivel nacio-



MO FOTO: BRENDA RYAN

El 25 de septiembre en la primera sesión de la Asamblea Popular del Bronx pro trabajos y sobrevivencia económica.

nal porque “la gente está marginada” y los organismos que supuestamente les representen, desde los ayuntamientos al Congreso, “están en los bolsillos de los banqueros”.

Holmes mencionó la marcha en Washington del 2 de octubre apoyada por gran parte del movimiento sindical y la NAACP e instó a que la gente fuera para que presentaran “un programa verdadero de empleos”. También sugirió que se convirtiera el día del cumpleaños del Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. en enero, en un “Día de lucha por empleos”.

La co-moderadora Brenda Stokely del Movimiento de la marcha de millones de trabajadores hizo hincapié en que la Asamblea Popular debería centrarse en el desarrollo de tácticas de aprendizaje de lo que ha funcionado en el pasado y lo que está funcionando en el presente.

Muchas luchas representadas

Un tiempo de discusión libre dio a todos /as la oportunidad de ser escuchados/as.

Ramón Jiménez comenzó. Candidato actual para fiscal general de Nueva York bajo la boleta del Partido de la Libertad, Jiménez es un veterano de la toma estudiantil de Hostos en el 1974 además de ser uno de los fundadores del Congreso de la Comunidad del Sur del Bronx.

El Partido de la Libertad (Freedom Party), una nueva formación política dirigida por militantes negros/as y latinos/as, va en contra de un “monstruo de tres cabezas” en las elecciones a gobernador,

dijo Jiménez. El demócrata Andrew Cuomo, el republicano Carlos Paladino y las fuerzas del Partido del Té creen en bajar los salarios y recortar las pensiones de los/as trabajadores/as del estado.

El candidato a la gobernación por el Partido de la Libertad, Charles Barron, es un ex Pantera Negra que como miembro del Ayuntamiento de Nueva York, le han votado en contra 48 a 1. “Él es el único”, dijo Jiménez, jocosamente subrayando que Barron es un luchador de principios.

Larry Hales habló en nombre de la Coalición para Defender la Educación Pública, que organizó las protestas nacionales en marzo pasado y se manifestará en Harlem el 7 de octubre exigiendo fondos para empleos y educación para jóvenes. Mark Torres, también de la CDEP, agregó que el evento se iniciará al mediodía en el City College para entonces marchar hacia la Oficina Estatal de Harlem. En el camino, se detendrán en una escuela “charter” para exigir que las empresas codiciosas de ganancias se mantengan fuera del sistema de escuelas públicas.

Daniel Vila del Movimiento de Trabajadores Independientes habló de la lucha de los jornaleros y vendedores/as ambulantes, que son en su mayoría indocumentados/as y muchas veces ni siquiera reciben paga. Su grupo realizó tres marchas que ayudaron a reducir el acoso policial de los/as vendedores/as.

La necesidad de solidaridad con los/as activistas contra la guerra en Minneapolis, Chicago y otras ciudades cuyos

hogares acababan de haber sido allanados por el FBI fue planteada por Holmes y repetida por otros/as oradores/as. Una demostración en Nueva York contra las redadas y citaciones se anunció para el 28 de septiembre.

¿Dónde están los trabajos?

Ligia Gualpa, una mujer ecuatoriana que dirige el Proyecto de Trabajadores/as de América Latina, habló de los graves sufrimientos de aquellos/as que no pueden encontrar trabajo en sus propios países debido a que corporaciones de EEUU monopolizan las principales industrias — en el caso de Ecuador, el banano y el petróleo — y migran a EEUU por desesperación.

Gualpa denunció el “Memorándum de Acuerdo” del gobernador de Nueva York David Paterson, para entregar los nombres e información de los/as trabajadores/as al Departamento de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas cuando estos/as son detenidos/as, incluso por sencillas violaciones de tráfico.

Christine Williams del sindicato de Trabajadores del Transporte Local 100 y Gavielle Gemma del grupo Recuperemos Nuestro Sistema de Tránsito hablaron de la lucha de los/as trabajadores/as de tránsito de Nueva York y de los/as pasajeros/as en contra de la Autoridad Metropolitana de Transporte (MTA).

Williams describió la hostilidad abierta de la gente en las audiencias recientes de la junta de la MTA. Gemma dijo que de los 28 miembros de la junta, que se supone representan los intereses del pueblo, todos menos uno son blancos. El sistema de tránsito, dijo, “es una fuente de ingresos para los bancos”.

Un conmovedor discurso fue dado por Gengis Muhammad de la organización Picture the Homeless (Imagínese a los sin techo), quien describió la lucha por “hogares no refugios”. Chevy Rivers de Ayuda al Pueblo hizo salir lágrimas a todos/as cuando ella habló del suicidio de su hija de 16 años de edad que había sido rechazada por un programa de empleo después de los recortes presupuestarios.

“¿Adónde fue a parar todo el dinero del

Continúa a página 10

Conferencia en Tijuana —

Uniando los/as trabajadores/as en las Américas

Por Cheryl LaBash

Por el séptimo año consecutivo, trabajadores/as, líderes sindicales, y activistas de movimientos sociales y por los derechos de inmigrantes se reunirán en Tijuana, México, para la Conferencia Estados Unidos / Cuba / Venezuela / América del Norte / Latinoamérica / Caribe, en el Hotel Palacio Azteca el próximo 3, 4 y 5 de diciembre. La información sobre la registración y el hotel se encuentra en línea en laborexchange.blogspot.com.

Cada año, el tema básico “No hay fronteras en la lucha obrera — uniando la clase trabajadora de las Américas y aumentando su influencia”, está colmado de varias maneras con la lucha viva y eventos

importantes que reciben poca atención en los medios de difusión corporativos de los Estados Unidos.

El programa y agasajo del viernes 3 de diciembre se enfocará en el caso de Los Cinco Cubanos, encarcelados injustamente en los EEUU, y la lucha mundial para liberarlos. Se exhibirán en primicia caricaturas políticas de Gerardo Hernández y muchas otras sorpresas. El 4 de diciembre se discutirán los acontecimientos internacionales, especialmente entre EEUU, Cuba y Latinoamérica, y particularmente los tratados de libre comercio impuestos en trabajadores/as en las Américas, y la alternativa a éstos que es la Alianza Bolivariana para las Américas (ALBA). El 5 de diciembre la conferencia

se enfocará en la migración e inmigración.

Entre los/as participantes internacionales están Carmen Godínez y otros/as representantes de la Confederación de Trabajadores Cubanos; Jacobo Torres de la Fuerza Socialista Bolivariana de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras de Venezuela; Roberto Caraspe y Rolando Semprum del Sindicato Metro Caracas; João Batista Lemos, Secretario Adjunto de Relaciones Internacionales del CTB de Brasil; y de México en el ducentésimo año de su independencia, el Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas que está luchando contra la privatización, además de otros/as sindicalistas y activistas. Otros/as representantes sindicales de Haití, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Colombia, y coordinadores/as del En-

cuentro Sindical Nuestra América, ESNA, también han sido invitados/as. ESNA es una organización nueva que involucra las federaciones sindicales más grandes y militantes en toda Latinoamérica.

Tijuana queda justamente al otro lado de la frontera EEUU/México cerca de San Diego, California. Se requiere pasaporte para regresar a los EEUU. La conferencia está auspiciada por el Intercambio Sindical EEUU/Cuba, la Federación Sindical Mundial, Unión del Barrio, el Centro de Acción Internacional y el Comité Internacional por la Libertad de los Cinco Cubanos. Para más información escriba a laborexchange@aol.com o laborexchange@gmail.com o llame al 313-575-4933 o 313-355-8566. □